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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3664th meeting of the Security Council, held on 15 May 1996 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Burundi", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Burundi, dated 3 May 1996 (S/1996/335) submitted pursuant to resolution 1049 (1996).

"The Security Council is gravely concerned at the continued deterioration of the security situation in Burundi, in particular at reports of a downward spiral of violence which has resulted in further large-scale killings in Buhoro and Kivyuka, and at the increasing flow of refugees from Burundi. The Council is deeply concerned that relief organizations have been prevented from delivering vital humanitarian and development assistance in Burundi, and at the suffering which this imposes on the people of Burundi. It calls on the parties and all concerned to refrain from any action that could aggravate the problem of refugees.

"The Security Council strongly condemns any use of violence and emphasizes its conviction that a lasting settlement of the situation in Burundi can only be found through peaceful means. The Council calls on the parties to engage in a comprehensive political dialogue aimed at achieving national reconciliation in Burundi. The Council urges once again the authorities and all parties concerned in Burundi to set aside their differences, renounce the use of force and demonstrate a firm political will for a prompt settlement of the conflict.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of the commencement of the National Debate provided for in the Convention of Government, as an appropriate mechanism for a wide-ranging political dialogue in which all parties to the conflict should participate without any preconditions. The Council reaffirms its support for the convening of the Regional Conference on Peace, Security and Development in the Great Lakes Region and calls upon all the States concerned to render their cooperation for the convening of the conference.

"The Security Council reiterates its full support for the ongoing efforts of former President Nyerere to facilitate negotiations and political dialogue to resolve the crisis in Burundi and looks forward to a successful outcome of the upcoming meeting in Mwanza, Tanzania, on 22 May 1996. The Council calls upon the parties to make full use of the meeting to achieve progress towards national reconciliation. It also supports the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative to that end.

"The Council emphasizes the importance of the continued cooperation of the United Nations with the Organization of African Unity, the European Union and other interested countries and organizations in coordination with former President Nyerere aimed at achieving the objective of a comprehensive political dialogue between the parties in Burundi. In this regard, the Council expresses its support for the efforts of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and its observer mission (MIOB) and calls upon all States to contribute generously to the OAU Peace Fund in order to enable the OAU to increase the size of the mission and to extend its mandate beyond July 1996.

"The Security Council welcomes the endorsement by the Secretary-General of the conclusions of the technical mission providing for United Nations radio broadcasts in Burundi and looks forward to being kept informed by him of progress made in the implementation of their recommendations.

"The Security Council reiterates the importance it attaches to the contingency planning called for in paragraph 13 of resolution 1049 (1996), and notes the consultations which have already taken place. In the light of recent developments, it requests the Secretary-General and Member States concerned to continue to facilitate, as a matter of urgency, contingency planning for a rapid humanitarian response in the event of widespread violence or a serious deterioration in the humanitarian situation in Burundi. It also encourages the Secretary-General further to pursue planning for steps that might be taken to support a possible political agreement.

"The Security Council reminds all parties of their responsibilities for restoring peace and stability in Burundi, and recalls its readiness, as set out in resolution 1040 (1996), to consider the adoption of further measures should the parties fail to demonstrate the necessary political will for a peaceful solution to the crisis. The Council will remain seized of the matter."